

removing decaying substances which would otherwise tend to pollute the air.

CANARY GRASS (*Phalaris Canariensis*).

Although bird-keepers are familiar with the canary-seed with which they feed so many of their pets, yet comparatively few people see the canary-grass growing or even know that there is such a grass.

I am apt to have a patch of it sown in some of the garden beds every year, as it is a beautiful sea green colour and makes a charming variety with other flowers. The stems are about two feet high, the leaves lance-shaped and the soft round heads of flower are pale green streaked with darker markings.

If we have but a few pots on a window-ledge canary grass can be grown. About a dozen seeds sown in good soil and kept watered and sheltered from frost will result in our seeing the pretty flower heads in due time. April or May would be the best time to sow the seed either in a pot or in the ground.

Canary grass is said to have been cultivated in this country in order to supply singing-birds with food ever since the days of Queen Elizabeth. It was introduced from Central Asia. It is largely grown in Kent and in the Isle of Thanet.

THE TRINITY FLOWER (*Trillium erectum*).

This plant rejoices in a variety of names. In North America it is known as the wood-lily, three-leaved nightshade and Indian shamrock; its Latin name is *Trillium*, the number



THE TRINITY FLOWER.

three seeming to be the order of its being. It possesses three leaves, three green bracts which look very much like the sepals of a calyx, and three perianth leaves differing from petals only in that those terms petal and sepal are never used in describing plants of the lily family.

I watch for the flowering of my *trilliums* each spring with keen interest, not only for their own exquisite beauty but also on account of the halo of poetic charm woven around this flower by Mrs. Ewing in her sweet legend of *The Trinity Flower*. I will not attempt to quote from it, but would advise my readers to

obtain the little book* in which it may be found, and then they will be able to understand my reverent love for this charming flower.

My plants were imported some years ago from Massachusetts, but they now can easily be obtained from dealers in herbaceous plants at home.

Trillium grandiflorum has large snow-white flowers and is the most beautiful of the sixteen species.

The illustration is drawn from *Trillium erectum*, which is called in America beth-root,



BEECH CATKINS.

Indian balm and lamb's quarters. It has green bracts striped with purple and reddish-purple perianth leaves. From its root a medicine is prepared which is valued for its curative properties.

This wood-lily is perfectly hardy, only requiring a light soil and a shady damp situation.

It comes up year after year, appearing in April and flowering early in May.

FLOWERING TREES.

In this month so many different trees produce their flowers or catkins that we must be on the alert to study them before they fall to the ground or are blown away by the wind.

Nature keeps us almost breathless in the attempt to overtake her marvellous energy. Every day something fresh appears; wild flowers are springing up, buds are opening, even early horse-chestnuts

are to be met with in full leaf, and growth is so rapid under the increasing warmth of the sun that sprays of opening buds, which we may be wishing to paint, are expanded into leaves before we have time to record their beauty in an early stage. Amongst other trees we must not fail to notice the hanging sprays of

* *Dandelion Clocks*, by Mrs. J. H. Ewing. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (one shilling).

larch with their yellow stamen-bearing flowers, the pollen from which falling upon the delicate crimson blossoms on the same spray will enable them to become the cones of next autumn, the wind being the agent in this process.

Many years ago, before the cultivation of the larch was understood, two seedling plants were sent to the Duke of Athole, and his gardener, with the best intentions, treated them as ashothouse-plants, which speedily brought them to such a dying condition that they were thrown away upon a rubbish heap. Hardly had they taken up this ignominious station than they revived and began to grow. When I visited Dunkeld many years ago the guide pointed out with pride two magnificent larches which were the aforesaid specimens now flourishing under favourable conditions.

The larch is a native of the Alps, and the roofs of the picturesque *châlets* in Switzerland are covered with shingles cut from this tree, the turpentine which exudes from the wood tending to make these roofs impenetrable to rain.

No one can fail to be struck with the curious catkins on the beech. The female blossom, which will become the beech-nut, is seated on the spray, whilst the male catkins hang down in clusters shedding out their pollen upon every passing breeze.

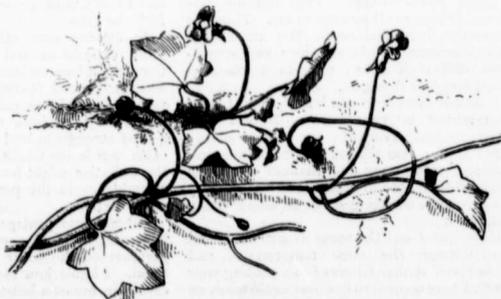
The beech-tree usually flowers every alternate year, so that possibly we may light upon a tree with leaf-buds only, and must then search further for another specimen bearing its catkins.

The limits of space will not admit of a special notice here of other trees, but knowledge of the fact that this is the flowering season will lead to some enjoyable study in hedgerows and woodlands.

Let us not grudge some time and trouble spent in becoming acquainted with the inconspicuous, but always interesting blossoms of our common trees.



LARCH BLOSSOM.



IVY-LEAVED TOAD-FLAX.